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Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 ACDA-07 TRSE-00 AGRE-00 COME-00 EB-08
LAB-04 SIL-01 IO-13 EUR-12 ARA-06 NEA-10 /115 W
----------081830Z 127204 /53
R 081153Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6613
INFO AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT LOUIS 0362

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR PINT ECON MP
SUBJECT: MAURITIUS WEEKLY REVIEW - APRIL 8 (SUMMARY)

REF: PORT LOUIS 317

1. THE POLITICAL SCENE THIS PAST WEEK WAS DOMINATED BY A GREAT DEBATE OVER NATIONALIZATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT COALITION AND THE OPPOSITION MAURITIAN MILITANT MOVEMENT (MMM). TWO DAYS AFTER CASTIGATING THE MMM IN THE ASSEMBLY FOR ADVOCATING NATIONALIZATION, AGRICULTURE MINISTER BOOLELL GAVE A NEWS-PAPER INTERVIEW IN WHICH HE CAME OUT FOR NATIONALIZING CERTAIN "ESSENTIAL SERVICES" INCLUDING THE DOCKS, PUBLIC TRANSPORT, PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND PRIVATE CLINICS. HIS PROTEGE, YOUNG LABOR DEPUTY JAMES BURTY DAVID, THEN ANNOUNCED HIS INTENTION TO INTRODUCE A MOTION TO NATIONALIZE THESE SECTORS (EXCEPT FOR PRIVATE CLINICS). AN URGENT MEETING OF THE LABOR PARLIAMENTARY GROUP OVERRULED DAVID AND THE NEXT DAY FINANCE MINISTER RINGADOO CARRIED THE FIGHT TO THE MMM IN THE ASSEMBLY WITH A FORCEFUL 90-MINUTE SPEECH DEFENDING THE PER-FORMANCE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR. HE PRAISED THE MAURITIAN SUGAR INDUSTRY AS THE ENVY OF MANY COUNTRIES THAT SHOULD NOT BE DISTRUBED IN ANY WAY LEST THE COUNTRY'S
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ECONOMY BE DESTROYED. HE ALSO ACCUSED THE MMM OF BEING THE AGENTS OF SOVIET AND CUBAN IMPERIALISM. IN THE END DAVID DID NOT PRESENT HIS MOTION AND A MMM AMENDMENT ADVOCATING NATIONALIZATION WAS DEFEATED 36 TO 33 ALONG STRICT PARTY LINES. THIS EPISODE IS BEING INTERPRETED AS PART OF THE POWER STRUGGLE BETWEEN RINGADOO AND BOOLELL TO SUCCEED RAMGOOLAM AS THE LABOR PARTY'S LEADER, WITH RINGADOO CLEARLY

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WINNING THIS ROUND BY DISPLACING BOOLELL AS THE DARLING OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR (RINGADOO HAS LONG BEEN CONSIDERED "ANTI-WHITE" AND A LEFTIST).

2. THE MMM ELECTED ITS NEW POLITICAL BUREAU ON APRIL 3, INCREASING ITS SIZE FROM 8 TO 10. THE FIVE SENIOR OFFICERS OF THE OLD BUREAU WERE RE-ELECTED AND THE NEW MEMBERS ARE MOSTLY KNOWN TO BE PROTEGES OF SECRETARY GENERAL BERENGER, WHO WILL CONTINUE TO DOMINATE THE PARTY THROUGH HIS CONTROL OF THE POLITBURO. RAMSEWAK, HEAD OF THE MMM'S TRADE UNION FEDERATION, RETURNED FROM A TRIP TO MOSCOW AND PARIS TO ANNOUNCE THAT HE HAD APPLIED FOR HIS ORGANIZATION TO JOIN THE PRO-SOVIET WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS. HE ALSO MADE CONTACT WITH "PROGRESSIVE" UNION GROUPS IN EASTERN EUROPE, FRANCE, MADAGASCAR AND REUNION.

3. PRIME MINISTER RAMGOOLAM IS GOING TO PARIS, BRUSSELS AND DAKAR FROM APRIL 12 TO 18, AND AGRICULTURE MINISTER BOOLELL WILL ATTEND SUGAR TALKS IN FIJI AND BRUSSELS DURING APRIL. PRIME MINISTER RENE OF THE SYECHELLES WILL MAKE AN OFFICIAL VISIT HERE FROM APRIL 11 TO 15.

4. THERE IS TROUBLE IN THE EXPORT PROCESSING ZONE, AS IT WAS REVEALED THAT OF THE 80 ENTERPRISES WHICH HAVE STARTED UP SINCE 1970, 4 HAVE FAILED, 7 APRE IN A "DISASTROUS" FINANCIAL SITUATION, AND ANOTHER 35 ARE MAKING NO PROFIT.
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Message Attributes

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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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